



ARMY FAMILY COVENANT: Keeping the Promise



HONORING OUR COMMITMENT TO SOLDIERS AND FAMILIES

ARMY FAMILY COVENANT: KEEPING THE PROMISE

In the words of our Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army, never before in the history of our Army have we asked so much of our Families. They are serving side-by-side with our Soldiers, enduring their hardships and providing the unconditional love and support that truly make our Army strong. The Army Family Covenant pledges our commitment to support Soldiers and their Families and resource programs to provide them a quality of life commensurate with their service.

On 8 October 2007, the Army unveiled the Army Family Covenant, which institutionalizes the Army's commitment to provide Soldiers and Families — Active, Guard, and Reserve — a quality of life commensurate with their level of service and sacrifice to the Nation. It commits the Army to improve Family readiness by:

- Standardizing Family programs and services
- Increasing accessibility to health care
- Improving Soldier and Family housing
- Ensuring excellence in child, youth and school services
- Expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members

The Army Family Covenant is in its second year and the commitment is enduring. The Army has made significant progress in improving Family programs, health care, housing, child and youth services, recreation, education and employment opportunities, but there is still work to be done to build an environment where Army Families can prosper and realize their full potential.

ARMY FAMILY COVENANT:

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Army Family Covenant

We recognize...

- ... The commitment and increasing sacrifices that our Soldiers make for their country
- ... The strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their families

We are committed to...

- ... Providing Soldiers and Families a Quality of Life that meets their needs
- ... Providing our Families a strong, supportive environment
- ... Building a partnership with Army Families that enhances their quality of life

We are committed to Improving Family Readiness by:

- Standardizing and funding existing Family programs and services
- Increasing accessibility and quality of health care
- Improving Soldier and Family housing
- Ensuring excellence in schools, youth services and child care
- Expanding education and employment opportunities for Families

2.1 Family Programs and Services

The Army is committed to standardizing Family programs and services.

- Standardized Army Community Service (ACS) staffing and programs at the garrisons and created 477 ACS staff positions to meet operational and staffing shortfalls.
- Added 1,079 Family Readiness Support Assistant positions to provide administrative and logistical support to the Commander, Rear Detachment Commander, and the Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leader.
- Increased number of Military Family Life Consultants from 144 to 212.
- Increased staff for the New Parent Support Home Visit Program to reach high risk Families. The program operates in 33 U.S. and 29 overseas garrisons.
- Established Army Survivor Outreach Services (SOS), a standardized, multi-agency, decentralized approach to improving support for survivors of fallen Soldiers. SOS recognized the need and developed Survivor Support Coordinators and Financial Counselors to improve outreach, referrals, life skills and investment education, and estate planning.
- Provided single portal access, via ARMYOneSource.com, to standardized programs and services, information and connectivity services at garrisons, Army National Guard Family Assistance Centers, and Army Reserve Centers for the geographically dispersed. As an Army asset integrator, it ensures access to support before, during and after a deployment.
- Supported 249 Army National Guard Family Assistance Centers which provide Soldiers and their Families support services, regardless of their geographic location.
- Funded approximately \$8 million for Exceptional Family Member respite care providing up to 40 hours of program care per month for Families with Exceptional Family Members.



- Developed Soldier and Family Assistance Centers (SFACs) at garrisons with Warrior Transition Units (WTU). Centers provide a safe haven where Wounded Warriors and DoD Civilians and their Families can gather for mutual support and camaraderie to aid physical, spiritual and mental healing. Services include transition support, financial counseling, child care and education counseling. Centers serve as a conduit for other federal, state, local, and non-governmental agencies.
- Conducted more than 1600 chaplain-led “Strong Bonds” marriage and Family enhancement retreats for 62,000 attendees to increase marital satisfaction, enhance readiness and reduce potential for divorce.
- Added 33 Family Life Chaplain positions to deliver effective Family ministry and training. Provided approximately \$35 million for marriage and relationship enhancement programs.
- Conducted more than 100,000 religious services around the world, including at home stations and on the battlefield. Ensured better access to religious support at the battalion level by adding 21 Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants.

2.2 Health Care

The Army is committed to increasing accessibility and quality of health care.

- Created 36 Warrior Transition Units (WTU) to support more than 7,700 Soldiers. An additional nine community-based WTUs are now serving more than 1,450 Warriors in Transition residing at home.
- Increased primary care visits to more than seven million in FY08, meeting access standards for 90% of patient acute, routine, and specialty appointments.
- Hired 189 of 259 new contract Behavioral Health (BH) providers (does not include providers who converted from contract to government employment) and launched an intensive marketing campaign to hire more BH providers.
- Funded 46 Marriage and Family Therapist positions.
- Filled 72% of the Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) counselor positions, an increase of 2% from last year.
- Provided Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic



Stress Disorder (TBI/PTSD) chain teaching to more than 900,000 Soldiers and conducted neurocognitive testing on more than 240,000 Soldiers prior to deployment. Educated 750 providers on TBI care and programs and provided advanced PTSD training to 950 BH providers (600 received web-based training). FY09 improvements included increasing the PTSD Training program from 12 to 24 courses and training 720 additional BH providers.

- Committed to providing depression and PTSD training to all Primary Care providers ensuring they have the skills and tools needed to treat patients.
- Created 200,000 training products for military children and Families to strengthen their resilience and ease the effects of deployments on children, spouses, and dual-military Families.



- Established a Center of Excellence for Children and Adolescents at Madigan Army Medical Center to develop appropriate prevention and resiliency-based psycho-educational support products.

- Strengthened partnership efforts with the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve the transition process for Soldiers.
- Authorized TRICARE Standard coverage for more than 500,000 eligible members of the Selected Reserve and their Family members and lowered the co-payment by 44% for individuals and 29% for Family members.
- Augmented Family Life Centers with U.S. Army Reserve Chaplains to increase access to supportive Family counseling and education as part of comprehensive counseling initiatives.
- Conducted regular suicide awareness, prevention and intervention training for Soldiers at their home station and while deployed.

2.3 Soldier and Family Housing

The Army is committed to improving Soldier and Family housing.

- Automated and enhanced housing services by offering the Automated Housing Referral Network, a home buying service, and Army Housing OneStop, an garrisons and community information source.
- Continued the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) that provided the Army with the ability to leverage private sector capital and best business practices,

ensuring quality facilities and communities will be sustained through the next 50 years. Through April 2009, RCI has privatized 43 of 45 planned garrisons, built more than 19,000 homes and renovated another 14,000. The planned goal calls for 87,747 homes or 98% of all Army Family Housing in the United States.

- Expanded the RCI model to include Unaccompanied Senior Enlisted/Officer Quarters at five garrisons (Forts Irwin, Drum, Bragg, Stewart, and Bliss) to address the shortage of adequate/affordable off-post rentals. The plan is to construct 1,396 one and two bedroom apartments.



- Received the 2008 President's Quality Award from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for the RCI program. RCI also won the Urban Land Institute's Award for Excellence in 2008.
- Funded the Training Barracks Modernization Program at \$930 million to allow 11,306 Soldiers to move into newly designed or renovated barracks in FY09. New construction or modernization of 19,746 barracks spaces is scheduled for completion by end of FY09.
- Introduced the First Sergeant's Barracks Initiative (FSBI) to enhance: single Soldier quality of life; reduce overall unprogrammed single Soldier basic allowance for housing; maximize barracks utilization while reducing the number of certificates of non-availability; and reallocate Soldier time from non-war fighting tasks.
- The Army approved \$500 million (FY08 GWOT supplemental) and \$100 million (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) for Warrior Transition Barracks.

2.4 Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS)

The Army is committed to ensuring excellence in child, youth, and school services.

- Ensured all garrison-level CYSS Programs are certified by the Department of Defense (equivalent of state licensing requirements).
- Reduced the financial burden on Army Families by eliminating CYSS registration fees and reducing program fees.
- Increased support to Warriors in Transition Families by providing child care during medical appointments, reducing child care fees, and eliminating fees for children of Wounded Warriors to participate in four CYSS instructional classes and two individual sports.

- Funded 72 FY08 Child Development Center (CDC) construction projects, programmed 29 additional Centers FY09-14, approved 18 new Youth Centers in FY08 and programmed seven additional Youth Centers FY09-14.
- Delivered community-based outreach services (including 60,000 Hero Packs) in 49 states and the District of Columbia to geographically dispersed children of deployed Active, National Guard, and Army Reserve Soldiers through Operation: Military Kids.
- Adopted the DoD Interstate Compact on Education Opportunity for Military Children in 20 states to date. Addressed four categories — eligibility, enrollment, placement and graduation — the compact removes “barriers to educational success” imposed on children of military Families due to frequent moves and deployment of parents.
- Collaborated with more than 373 school districts to support military-connected students transferring to new school systems.
- Obtained National Accreditation of 103 eligible Child Development Centers and 96 eligible School Age Programs.

2.5 Education, Careers and Libraries

The Army is committed to expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members.

- Placed more than 41,000 military spouses through The Army Spouse Employment Program, a partnership with Fortune 500 companies and government agencies to provide employment opportunities. An updated Web site (www.msjs.org) serves as a portal for military spouses to post resumes providing them the opportunity to achieve employment goals through career mobility and enhanced employment options.
- Partnered with The National Endowment of the Arts Partnerships for Arts and Humanities bringing classic literature, teacher, and reader’s guides to more than 2,900 students in 30 Army communities.
- Launched the Military Spouse Career Advancement Initiative with the Department of Defense and Labor to provide spouses with up to \$3,000 annually for education, training and certification.
- Offered 39 library reference databases through ARMY OneSource (AOS) and Army Knowledge Online (AKO) to support education and life-long learning pursuits. This centralized purchase saved \$7.1 million.

- Purchased enterprise-wide DoD funded library databases through the Army Library Program. The databases support Family educational needs such as improving literacy among children.
- Developed a 24/7 General Library Information System which offers library services to Soldiers and Family members including the National Guard and Reserves, anytime, anywhere.
- Initiated the Army Library Program “Reach Out and Read” that provides pediatric literacy training to hospital personnel at 20 locations. Children at well-baby/child appointments receive a free book and parents receive instructional tips on teaching reading.
- Provided a database of reading and audio materials, available upon request, to Family members of the deployed. Subjects include self-help, educational, literary classics, and best sellers.

2.6 Recreation, Travel and BOSS

The Army is committed to providing Soldiers and Families a quality of life that is commensurate with their service through quality Recreation, Travel and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) programs and services.

- Developed Warrior Adventure Quest (WAQ), a Soldier program supporting reset and re-integration that combines high adventure outdoor recreation activities with Battlemind training to help develop Soldier coping skills. Comprised of Army medical, psychology, behavioral health, and safety professionals, WAQ targets units during the first 90 days of home-station return.
- Coordinated a four-day training course with Pennsylvania State University that trains recreation professionals on how to integrate Wounded Warriors into existing programs.
- Teamed with the National Amputee Golf Association (NAGA) and the United States Golf Association to provide Warrior Transition Units with golf instructional clinics. These clinics enable Soldiers to use golf as part of a total transition back to an active lifestyle.
- Created the Wounded Warrior Sports Program to provide a goal-oriented sports program for physically disabled Soldiers remaining on active duty.
- Partnered with leading bowling industry coach to incorporate adaptive bowling education in Army Bowling Manager certification program,



ensuring high quality support to Wounded Warriors and Army Family members with special needs.

- Approved requirements for 48 full-time BOSS positions to enhance quality of life and morale for single Soldiers.
- Developed a bowling promotion that brands bowling centers as Family-friendly environments, while teaching children about the centers and the game.
- Increased recreation facility operating hours and programming, and provided on-site child care at locations with deployed Soldiers.



- Deployed Morale, Welfare and Recreation professionals into Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan to provide quality of life, entertainment and recreation support.
- Developed the web-based Army Arts and Crafts Contest to allow geographically dispersed Soldiers and Family members to participate in the program.
- Standardized and increased the quality of fitness center exercise equipment across the Army.
- Provided Soldier entertainment including the U.S. Army Soldier Show and USA Express Band.
- Provided multiple money-saving travel opportunities to popular domestic destinations through the Information, Tickets and Reservation Office and online at www.Offdutytravel.com.
- Planned renovations are underway at three lodging locations: Fort Stewart (GA), Fort Lewis (WA) and Camp Zama (Japan). New lodging hotels have opened at Camp Humphreys (South Korea), Dugway Proving Ground (UT), Fort Knox (KY), Fort Lewis (WA) and Hohenfels (Germany). New lodging hotels are under construction at Chievres (Belgium), Fort Jackson (SC), Grafenwoehr, Wiesbaden, and Stuttgart (Germany) and Vicenza (Italy).

2.7 Communities and Marketplace

The Army is committed to providing Families a strong, supportive environment where they can thrive.

- Provided military Families in 35 states with continued in-state college tuition benefits after the military sponsor leaves the state.
- Conducted 86 Community Covenant signing ceremonies in 2008 and more than 60 signing ceremonies in 2009 with dozens more in various planning stages. Leveraged public and private support for Soldiers and Families through

the Community Covenant, and more than 1,500 best community support practices on the Covenant Web site.

- Supported more than 30 bills enacted by states in 2007 to address flexible and expedited processes to aid military-connected voters in deployed areas.
- Integrated resources in 38 states through Inter-Service Family Assistance Forums to assist military Families with child care, resources for schools, teachers and youth, and to facilitate easy access to information, services, and support. The Department of Defense is continuing to increase utilization and coordination with high-level state officials and agencies.
- Programmed ten new commissary projects with a \$210 million investment over the next three years.
- Provided the Commissary benefit that saved an average of more than 30% on purchases by Soldiers and Families compared to commercial prices. Savings totaled \$3,400 annually for a Family of four.
- Conducted Commissary on-site sales at 104 locations for Guard and Reserve Soldiers and their Families. Guard and Reserve Families purchased \$14 million worth of commissary products.
- Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) is a major source of employment; approximately 25% of the more than 43,000 AAFES associates are military Family members. Another 1.1% of associates are military members who work part-time in exchanges during their off duty hours.
- In FY08, AAFES provided \$589 million in direct support via MWR dividends and capital investment to the Army and Air Force and completed 17 long-range capital projects at a cost of \$159 million.



- In FY08, 423 AAFES associates volunteered and deployed in support of OEF/OIF operations. Additionally, the number of AAFES Impress Fund Activities, serving remote sites downrange numbered 16 in Iraq and 25 in Afghanistan.
- AAFES leveraged a variety of communication avenues in support of Military and ARMY OneSource. AAFES placed commercials on the BX's and PX's in-store television and radio networks, advertised through e-newsletters and the Exchange Online Store, and also provided content regarding exchange benefits to Military and ARMY OneSource.

The Army is committed to providing
Quality Support, Services and Benefits
to Soldiers and Families.



Regardless of where you live or what your connection to the Army is, **ARMY OneSource** provides easy access to the information, resources and tools that you need.



ARMYOneSource.com